

Winter 2024

VIRGINIA PENINSULA  
Foodbank

Food  
first

*Inspiring Hope, Feeding Families*



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PARTNER  
FOOD BANK OF  
FEEDING  
AMERICA

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## MISSION

The mission of the Virginia Peninsula Foodbank is to distribute food effectively through collaborative efforts that minimize hunger, promote nutrition, and encourage self-reliance through education.



## A NOTE FROM KAREN & JONATHAN



*Dear Friends,*

Have you ever seen a child playing in the summer and thought, "How lucky is that child to have so much free time without a worry in the world?" Those carefree days of summer are not always worry-free for the 1 in 7 children who live in food insecure households across the greater Peninsula. When school is out, these children are particularly vulnerable to hunger because of the lack of access to the school meals they depend on from late August to early June. That's where your Foodbank comes in to support our youngest neighbors in need.

Although it is only March, we are already planning for our summer Child Nutrition Programs. Last year we provided over 22,000 meals and over 16,000 healthy snacks to more than 900 children at our Summer Food Service Program sites. In addition, we provided hundreds of bags of purchased food to these children through our Food for Kids Backpack program so that they would also have food over the weekends. This year we hope to build on this success.

We are only able to produce the meals and provide the groceries to our most vulnerable neighbors in need because of your help. The next time you see a child playing without a care in the world, know that your support and that of others around you made that possible. We are grateful to be able to provide assistance to the young and the old through your help.

With Appreciation,

Karen L. Joyner  
Chief Executive Officer

Jonathan Toms  
Board President



**Please consider joining the community of friends who will be providing charitable food assistance for our neighbors in need across the greater Peninsula well into the future.**

If you have already made the decision to include Virginia Peninsula Foodbank in your will, please let us know so we can express our appreciation. If you would prefer to remain anonymous, be assured we will respect your wishes.

For more information about bequests and other future gift options, contact the Foodbank at (757) 596-7188. All inquiries will remain confidential.



# MLK DAY OF SERVICE

Every year on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, volunteers from across the Peninsula join to support the Foodbank for a Day of Service. This year, the Foodbank received support from NASA Langley Research Center staff, Langley Federal Credit Union team members, and Alpha Phi Alpha Zeta Lambda Fraternity members, among other individuals.

The Newport News Mayor's Office continued honoring Dr. King's legacy through the 8th Annual MLK Day of Service Food Drive. We were grateful to have Mayor Phillip Jones run the 4-hour event, collaborating with Sheriff Gabe Morgan, Police Chief Steve Drew, and other civic organizations. The rain and snow didn't stop our community from coming together, and by the end of the day, we received the equivalent of over 7,000 meals in donations!

We're grateful for the support of NASA, Langley FCU, Newport News Mayor's Office, Newport News Sheriff's Office, Newport News Police Department, and all other organizations that volunteered their time and resources. The relief provided by the volunteers on MLK Day of Service and the donations honors Dr. King and his work.



# MAKING OUR PARTNER AGENCIES STRONGER

Williamsburg House of Mercy, a partner agency of Virginia Peninsula Foodbank, thanks the Foodbank for coordinating a grant through the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development for a 14-foot refrigerated truck. The food pantry supports an average of 250 families each week and the truck is instrumental in receiving food donations and providing food transport.





## A TRANSFORMATION OF HOPE FOR OUR COMMUNITY

In celebration of September's Hunger Action Month, Food Lion Feeds donated a pantry makeover to our partner agency, Gleaning Baptist Church, to help better serve families experiencing food insecurity in Gloucester. Since the first Great Pantry Makeover in 2014, Food Lion Feeds has been awarding a pantry makeover each year to a partner agency to support their food distributions, enhance capacity and improve their food rescue program. During Hunger Action Month, Feeding America's network of 200 food banks nationwide mobilize the public to take action on the issue of hunger.

"Through Food Lion Feeds, we nourish our communities by identifying and developing relationships with our partner food banks," said Kevin Durkee, Manager, Food Lion Feeds, Food Lion. "At Food Lion, giving back to our communities is as meaningful as serving our customers. Our associates believe in the value of volunteer work. By being partners in action, our volunteer Food Lion associates offer immediate and long-term solutions to address food insecurity in the towns and cities we serve."

To assist with the pantry makeover, Food Lion team members volunteer their time to paint walls, assemble shelves and carts, install flooring, stock the shelves with a food donation from Food Lion, and perform other tasks needed to make the pantry more efficient and productive for our partner agency to distribute the food.

"The Food Lion Feeds pantry makeover has been such a blessing to our community," states Pastor Stevens Burrell of Gleaning Baptist Church. "The makeover allowed us to remodel our

entire pantry area so that we can store more food items and the additional carts and equipment have helped us transport the food to the individuals' car more efficiently so we can better serve our community. We are so grateful for the partnership with Virginia Peninsula Foodbank and the generosity and support from Food Lion Feeds."



Gleaning Baptist Church has been a partner agency with the Foodbank for close to 20 years and serves approximately 200 households a week.

Virginia Peninsula Foodbank is very grateful for the generosity and support that we and our partner agencies receive throughout the year from our friends at Food Lion Feeds. Our mission would not be possible without our community partners and our food pantries who help us expand our reach so anyone who is need has a place to go to for help.



# Closing The Case on Hunger



Huffman & Huffman Brothers-in-Law, a local law firm, is making a big impact on our hunger relief efforts to nourish the community. Their commitment and dedication are truly inspiring throughout the year.

Our relationship started with them back in 2009 when they donated 300 turkeys for the holiday giving season to families whose children attended one of our Kids Cafe sites. Since partnering with us, they have volunteered over 117 hours of their time and provided the equivalent of over 14,000 meals.

One of their most memorable contributions was during the 106.9 The Fox and FM99 Mayflower Marathon food drive last November. They donated 50 turkeys in celebration of their 50 years in business along with a generous \$1,500 monetary donation. Their generosity and thoughtfulness touched the hearts of many and brought hope for a happy holiday season to families having to stretch their budgets to make ends meet each week.

In addition, they also participate in the Legal Food Frenzy, an annual fundraising competition created in partnership with the Virginia Attorney General, the Young Lawyers Division of the Virginia Bar Association, and the Federation of Virginia Food Banks. This competition not only raises much-needed funds for hunger relief, but it also raises awareness about the issue of hunger in our community.

Brad Huffman, Senior Partner Attorney at Huffman & Huffman Brothers-in-Law states, "At Huffman & Huffman Brothers-in-Law, our dedication to help those in need expands beyond the courtroom. We are humbled to support the Virginia Peninsula Foodbank and to play a small role in the fight against hunger. Our team takes great joy in volunteering and actively supporting such an essential organization for the betterment of our community."

We are truly honored to have community partners like Huffman & Huffman Brothers-in-Law, who are dedicated to making a positive impact in the lives of others. Their contributions make a significant difference in feeding families on the Virginia Peninsula.

# STATEWIDE HEALTHY PANTRY INITIATIVE

This month, Virginia Peninsula Foodbank had the honor of awarding two partner agencies with the Healthy Pantry Initiative Pilot (HPI) Grant provided by the Federation of Virginia Food Banks. The Healthy Pantry Initiative is a movement guiding all interested partner pantries in implementing more health-focused and neighbor-centered practices. The grant funding is meant to empower and equip pantries to implement practices that will encourage health equity within our communities. To be eligible for the grant, partner agencies completed an assessment provided by the Federation of Virginia Food Banks. The data from the assessments were then used to select the initial two pantries.

The selected pantries expressed a desire to implement HPI practices that were not currently implemented and expressed the need for additional support. Greater Joy Church of God in Christ will be utilizing the grant funds to repair an existing ramp to accommodate neighbors living with all physical and mental capabilities, as well as purchasing bus passes to address transportation barriers. Dominion Outreach Worship Center will be utilizing the funds to purchase refrigeration and freezer storage to increase access to fresh produce. Future grant funding will ensure that more and more pantries can implement health pantry practices.



## FOOD AS MEDICINE

At Virginia Peninsula Foodbank, we understand that nutrition inequity leads to disparities in health outcomes and quality of life. Our most recent partnership with Sentara Healthcare included Food as Medicine programming in support of the Peninsula C.A.R.E.S Foundation, an organization committed to addressing health equity among marginalized communities on the Peninsula. Collectively, we collaborated on a 16-week pilot program to bring nutritional education, meal kits, and cooking classes to neighbors living with chronic health conditions. Post-survey data and screenings showed that health metrics improved from the beginning of the program to the end.

Virginia Peninsula Foodbank has also partnered with Sentara and Riverside healthcare organizations to implement home health delivery programs for home health, palliative, and hospice patients. This food as medicine program model provides food access within the healthcare setting to neighbors at risk of food insecurity. Shelf stable boxes are stored on-site at clinics and delivered to patient homes. The goal is to expand these programs through continued healthcare collaborations.





## THE GIFT OF TIME

Stephanie Thompson, an employee of Sentara Health Plans, began volunteering with Virginia Peninsula Foodbank in February of 2023 and has contributed more than 130 hours of volunteer service to the Foodbank in the past year.

It was the Foodbank's visibility in the community that first got Stephanie's attention. "I see the Foodbank a lot in the community. I wanted to be a part of something I see," said Stephanie. "The Foodbank has helped my family in the past," she added.

Stephanie often volunteers to sort donations, pack food boxes, fill Food for Kids BackPack bags, and distribute food at local pantries. "I plan on volunteering here as long as I can. It makes you feel like an active part of the community. It's good to give back."

Stephanie also frequently takes a lead role in training new volunteers. "I've met a lot of different people from different walks of life - people in school, retired, etc. It helped me with my team building and interpersonal skills working with a diverse group of people with the same goal."

With more than 48,000 people on the Peninsula experiencing food insecurity, the goal remains the same – to provide daily access to nutritious food to those in need across our community.

The Foodbank relies on volunteers like Stephanie to achieve our mission. Thank you for volunteering!



## NEXT SCENE: IN THE KITCHEN

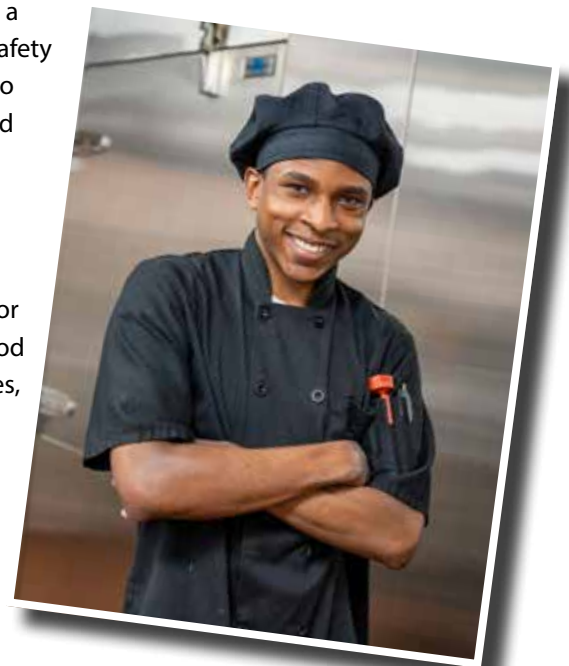
Jaylen always dreamed about being an actor, but he knew he first needed to learn a sense of discipline and demonstrate that he is "hard-working and can make my family proud."

During his time in the Foodbank's Culinary Training Program, Jaylen says he received a preview of "the challenges you get in the real world." Through a curriculum of food safety and food preparation efficiency, Jaylen notes that, "Now I can cook for myself and also make food for fun events. I have knife skills, know temperature requirements, learned about food groups, and won't waste food."

The most rewarding part of the program was preparing hot meals daily for children in need to receive during the evenings at the Foodbank's Kids Cafe Program sites. Students during the program's summer months prepare breakfast and lunch meals for children at community sites through the Summer Food Service Program. "It feels good that we can make sure that these kids will be able to eat something, enjoy themselves, and not worry about being hungry," Jaylen says.

After being named the program's "Student of the Week," Jaylen says that people around the Foodbank's offices and warehouse recognized and congratulated him. "I really respect the people here," Jaylen states. "Being noticed for that told me that if I just show up and do my best, I can be successful."

Whether his future path places him in a kitchen or in front of a movie camera, Jaylen feels prepared by the "pretty awesome chef teachers" to achieve his goals. "It was tough," he admits. "But I know that if I listen and do what's right, I'm ready for some good challenges now."



# Upcoming Events

**March 10 - April 13**  
Ollie's Bargain Outlet Roundup

**April 11th**  
Tastefully Yours - Tickets on sale now

**April 15th - April 26th**  
Statewide Legal Food Frenzy - [legalfoodfrenzy.com](http://legalfoodfrenzy.com)

**May 11th**  
National Association of Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive

**May 25th**  
Chick-Fil-A 10K, 5K & Fun Run at Mariners' Museum  
[www.cfa5k.com](http://www.cfa5k.com) to register

**May 29th - June 25th**  
Food Lion Feeds Summers Without Hunger

*The Peninsula's Premier Food Tasting Event*

# TASTEFULLY YOURS



**BACK to the 80's**



Tickets \$65, \$75 day of event  
Available at [hrfoodbank.org](http://hrfoodbank.org)  
or call 757-596-7188

*April 11, 6-9:30 pm*  
*Hampton Roads Convention Center*

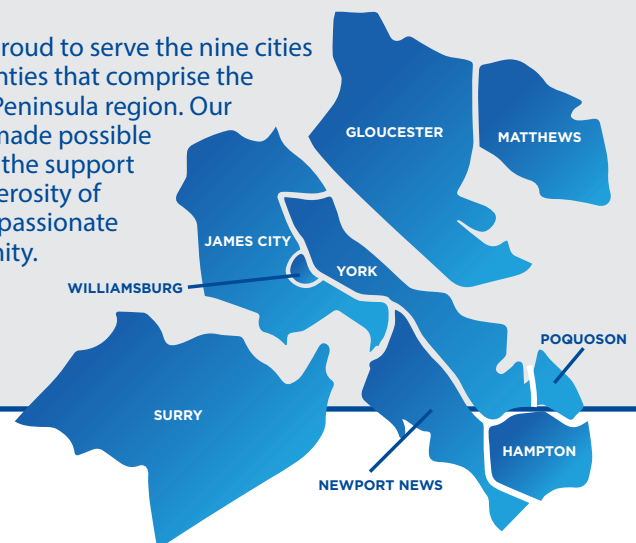
Delicious Food • Craft Beer & Wine • Mini Vegas • Live Band • Photo Booths



2401 Aluminum Avenue  
Hampton, VA 23661  
757-596-7188  
[hrfoodbank.org](http://hrfoodbank.org)



We are proud to serve the nine cities and counties that comprise the greater Peninsula region. Our work is made possible through the support and generosity of our compassionate community.



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